Pollution of Rivers

277. SHRI J.P. GOYAL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that water of all rivers in the country has become polluted and germs of serious diseases of lungs and skin are found in these rivers ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the ashes of dead bodies and thousands of unburnt dead bodies are thrown into the rivers and the waste of industries is also released into the rivers;

(c) whether any steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken to check such practice;

(d) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(e) if the reply to part (c) above be in the negative, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI) : (a) Stretches of many rivers are highly polluted. Use of polluted water often gives rise to water-borne diseases like typhoid dysentery etc. It is difficult to correlate lung and skin diseases directly with the pollution.

(b) *Yes, Sir.*

(c) and (d) The steps taken by the Government to prevent and control pollution of rivers in the country include the following :

(i) Creation of public awareness;

(ii) Construction of Electric Crematoria;

(iii) Zoning and classification of river stretchers for designated uses ;

(iv) Formulation of Minimum National Standards for various polluting industries and their phased implementation by Central and State Pollution Control Boards ;

(v) Persuading industries to adopt pollution control measures ;

(vi) Legal action against defaulting industries ;

(vii) Financial incentives for installation and satisfactory performance of polution control equipment;

(viii) Encouragement for installation of common effluent treatment plants particularly for the small-scale industries; and

(ix) Formulation of basin-wise pollution control programmes such as the Ganga Action Plan .

(e) Does not arise.

Effect of price hike on people living below Poverty Line

278. SHRI J.P. GOYAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the recent price hike in almost all the essential commodities has effected the people living below the poverty line or who had been raised from the poverty line ;

(b) whether due to this price escalation the poverty line has changed.

(c) if so, the details thereof ; and

(d) what is the number of persons living below the poverty line as a result of all round rise in prices and what steps are contemplated for their upliftment.